

## Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01  
INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15  
USIA-06 SAJ-01 TRSE-00 AID-05 IO-13 OMB-01 /088 W  
----- 040919

R 081009Z DEC 76

FM AMEMBASSY JIDDA  
TO /SECSTATE WASHDC 6544  
INFO AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI  
AMEMBASSY CAIRO  
AMEMBASSY DOHA  
AMCONSUL DHAHRAN  
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS  
AMEMBASSY LONDON  
AMEMBASSY MANAMA  
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW  
AMEMBASSY MUSCAT  
AMEMBASSY PARIS  
AMEMBASSY SANA  
AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

C O N F I D E N T I A L JIDDA 7912

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, SA, UR

SUBJECT: SAUDI-USSR RELATIONS

REF (A) JIDDA 7761, (B) MOSCOW 18840

SUMMARY: SOVIET NEW TIMZ ARTICLE HAS ANNOYED SAG AND PROBABLY STIFFENED THEIR DETERMINATION TO RESIST SOVIET ENCROACHMENT IN THE PENINSULA. END SUMMARY

1. SINCE THE TWO CRITICAL EDITORIALS REPORTED REF A APPEARED IN THE SAUDI PRESS, THE NEWSPAPER UKAZ HAS RUN TWO MORE EDITORIALS ATTACKING THE USSR. IN REF A WE NOTED THAT UKAZ IS A SOMETIME MOUTHPIECE FOR CROWN PRINCE FAHD. THERE NOW SEEMS LITTLE DOUBT THAT IN ITS PRESENT SERIES OF EDITORIALS UKAZ IS EXPRESSING THE TENOR OF THE CROWN PRINCE'S DISPLEASURE

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IF NOT HIS PRECISE VIEWS.

2. IF, AS EMBASSY MOSCOW SUGGESTS IN REF B, THE NEW TIME ARTICLE REFLECTS AN ABANDONMZN BY THE SOVIETS OF THEIR DRIVE TO ESTABLISH AND IMPROVE RELATIONS IN THE GULF REGION, AND IN PARTICULAR WITH SAUDI ARABIA, WE THINK THEY HAVE MADE A MISTAKE MUCH TO OUR BENEFIT.

3. THERE HAD BEEN NO CHANGE IN THE BASIC SAUDI POLICY OF REFUSING DIRECT RELATIONS WITH COMMUNIST STATES BUT THERE HAVE BEEN A NUMBER OF RECENT SIGNS OF SOME SOFTENING OF HOSTILITY TOWARDS THEM--IN LARGE PART BECAUSE OF IRRITATION WITH ASPECTS OF AMERICAN POLICY. SUCH ACTIONS AS WE HAVE NOTED HAVE PERHAPS BEEN INTENDED MORE TO SHOW THE U.S. THAT THE SAG IS NOT A CLIENT WITH NO POLICY ALTERNATIVES THAN AS GESTURES TOWARDS THE COMMUNISTS.

4. NONETHELESS, SOVIET LACK OF PATIENCE MAY HAVE BLOWN AN OPPORTUNITY. REPORTING FROM OTHER ARAB GULF POSTS HAS INDICATED AN INCLINATION BY HOST GOVERNMENTS TO ACCEPT SOME REPRESENTATION BY COMMUNIST STATES WITH SAUDI OPPOSITION AS THE MAJOR INHIBITING FACTOR. WHILE SAUDI PRESSURE WAS A FACTOR OF SOME IMPORTANCE IN THE DECISION BY KUWAIT AND BAHRAYN TO PUT TOUGHER CONTROLS ON INTERNAL LEFTIST ACTIVITY, SAUDI ARABIA AT THE SAME TIME HAS TAKEN A SOMEWHAT LESS RIGID LINE IN ITS DEALINGS WITH RADICAL ARAB STATES, INCLUDING A GREATER DEGREE OF ACCEPTANCE OF THE REALITY OF THEIR RELATIONS WITH THE USSR AND OTHER COMMUNIST COUNTRIES. THIS MIGHT HAVE EVOLVED INTO A LESSENED DEGREE OF OPPOSITION TO COMMUNIST REPRESENTATION IN THOSE GULF STATES WHERE THERE NOW IS NONE. IT IS LESS LIKELY TODAY THAT THERE WILL BE ANY CHANGE IN THE SAUDI POSITION.

5. WE WERE ALSO STRUCK BY HOW QUICKLY THE SAUDIS REACTED (PERHAPS THE EGYPTIANS TOLD THEM ABOUT IT), AND BY THE VEHEMENCE, ANIMOSITY AND LACK OF SUBTLETY OF THE NEW TIME ARTICLE. THE SAUDIS SEEM TO BE STICKING TO THEIR TRADITIONAL POSITION, BUT THEY SEEM TO BE

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PAYING MORE ATTENTION THAN EVER TO WHAT THE SOVIETS ARE DOING AND SAYING.

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## Message Attributes

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